



United States Department of Agriculture

The E. (Kika) De La Garza Fellowship Program

2009



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| ABOUT E. (KIKI) DE LA GARZA..... | 2 |
| USDA E. (KIKI) DE LA GARZA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM | 3 |
| EDUCATION FELLOWS..... | 4 |
| Adewale Alonge (High School)..... | 5 |
| Ricarda Cerda..... | 6 |
| Martha Garcia..... | 7 |
| S. Aaron Hegde..... | 8 |
| Thavery Lay-Bounpraseuth..... | 9 |
| Neil Ledford..... | 10 |
| Eric López..... | 11 |
| Lora Lopez..... | 12 |
| Judy Newman (High School)..... | 13 |
| Lorena Ochoa..... | 14 |
| Maria Poviones-Bishop..... | 15 |
| Enrique Rentería..... | 16 |
| Garth Schultz..... | 17 |
| Carmen Velasquez..... | 18 |
| Maria Villanueva..... | 19 |
| Beatriz Zayas..... | 20 |
| SCIENCE FELLOWS..... | 21 |
| Pilar Maul..... | 22 |
| Rudy Ortiz..... | 23 |
| Mariel Perez-Velez..... | 24 |
| Sylvia Vetrone..... | 25 |
| FELLOWS' ADVISORS..... | 26 |
| Mark Bender (California State University, Stanislaus)..... | 27 |
| Dan Hostetler (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona)..... | 28 |
| USDA-HSI NATIONAL PROGRAM STAFF..... | 29 |





E. "Kika" De La Garza II

United States Representative

*Eighty-ninth - One Hundred Fourth Congresses
Serving from January 3, 1965 - January 3, 1997*

ABOUT E. (KIKI) DE LA GARZA

Eligio (Kika) de la Garza was born September 22, 1927 in Mercedes, Texas.

De la Garza attained his Doctor of Jurisprudence from St. Mary's University Law School, in San Antonio, Texas. He is a member of the Texas State Bar Association and was admitted to practice in the Federal Courts and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Kika served six consecutive terms in the Texas House of Representatives before spending thirty-two years as a leading U.S. Congressman from Texas, in addition to working twelve years in the practice of law. The first Hispanic Congressman elected from Texas' 15th District, Kika served as Chairman of the Congressional Agriculture Committee from 1981-1994. He played a large role in overhauling the agricultural lending system, implementing Federal farm crop insurance and commodity futures reform, reorganizing the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and providing numerous aid packages for American and international agriculture. Additionally during his time in Congress, Kika co-founded the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

As an expert on national and international law related to agriculture and commerce, Kika played a major role in expanding trade with Japan, the former Soviet Union, China, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East. A skilled and multilingual communicator de la Garza has developed close working relationships with top-level government officials throughout the world.



USDA E. (Kika) DE LA GARZA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The USDA E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellowship Program offers faculty and staff from Hispanic Serving Institutions the opportunity to work collaboratively with USDA to gain insight and understanding of the federal government. This uniquely tailored experience brings together HSI staff and federal executives to address the spectrum of challenges faced in the development of a well prepared Hispanic workforce.

Fellows spend two to four weeks in Washington, D.C. to increase their understanding of USDA and other federal agencies; particularly at the national level and to identify and explore mutual collaborative interests.

EDUCATION FELLOWS

Education Fellows experience first-hand the education policymaking process and build linkages to research and funding opportunities. In addition to meeting with USDA officials, Fellows connect with other federal agencies and organizations. Participants enrich the USDA with their diverse experiences and allow for on-going dialogue regarding the educational challenges facing the Hispanic community.

Also, the Fellowship enhances the participant's professional growth and knowledge of the federal government, thereby improving the quality of teaching, student services, and advancement of institutional development programs at their respective HSIs.



ADEWALE ALONGE



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Dr. Adewale Alonge earned his Ph.D. in Agricultural & Extension Education from the Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. He also holds a first class honor Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Dr. Alonge is an agriculture instructor and FFA advisor with the Miami Dade County Public School.

Dr. Alonge is a recipient of the Rockefeller Foundation dissertation research fellowship at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Nigeria (1988 – 1990) and also the Japanese Fulbright Exchange fellowship (2005 – 2007). His major areas of research include technology integration into K-12 curriculum, and the delivery of agricultural extension services in less developed countries. His most recent research compared the integration of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) into secondary school curricula in the United States, Japan and Trinidad. He has also authored several agri-science curriculum packages and publications in professional journals and conferences, and is a test writer for the Florida Teacher Certification Exam for K-12 agriculture instruction.

Dr. Alonge is a member of the Association for International & Extension Education (AIAEE) and the Florida Association for Agricultural Educators. He is an editorial board member of the Journal of International Agricultural & Extension Education. Dr. Alonge is the founder and volunteer executive director of ADPED, Inc a 501 3 © organization committed to promoting sustainable development.



RICARDA CERDA



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Ricarda Cerda is a graduate of California State University, Fresno with a BA in Home Economics and a Master of Science in Dietetics and Community Nutrition. She is a registered dietitian. She has twenty years of experience in public health as a Project Director/ Nutritionist for WIC in Fresno, Sequoia, and Madera Counties. As a WIC nutritionist she served on numerous state and federal committees. She served as a media spokes person for Latino-5-A-Day, Tropicana Orange Juice, California Tree Fruit Agreement, Alliance for Food and Fiber, and the California Table Grape Commission.

She teaches courses in normal nutrition, therapeutic nutrition and child nutrition at Fresno City College. In addition, she is the lead person coordinating adjunct instructors, curriculum, certificate programs, program review, and action plans. Her activities include: active member of Fresno City College; co-chair of Nutrition, Food Service and Cal-Pro Net Center Advisory Committee; served on the Academic Senate and Student Welfare Committee; and presenter for the classified employees training days. One of her greatest joys is mentoring students and helping them find their passion both officially as a Puente mentor and unofficially to any student seeking assistance.



MARTHA GARCIA



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Martha Garcia currently serves as a CalWORKs Assessment Counselor and Personal Development Instructor for Imperial Valley College in Imperial, CA; where she has been since 1999. In addition, she completed the Imperial Valley College G.L.E.A.M. (Gaining Leadership Experience, Aptitude and Mentoring) Program in June 2008, a program designed to prepare faculty for future leadership positions. She is currently serving as a Recording Secretary for IVCC/CTA/NEA Executive Committee for the fourth consecutive year.

Ms. Garcia is currently pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Postsecondary Educational Leadership at San Diego State University. She earned a Master's Degree in Educational Counseling from National University and a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice Administration from San Diego State University.

Ms. Garcia is very passionate about assisting students from underrepresented backgrounds, since she personally experienced the barriers of being a single mother that came from a low socio-economic background. Additionally, she overcame the challenges of being a first generation college student.

Ms. Garcia's story portrays that anyone can succeed with dedication, persistence and proper guidance. She believes that the only way to prosper in life is by obtaining an education. Her personal interests include spending time with her 11 year-old son and traveling.



S. AARON HEGDE



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Dr. S. Aaron Hegde is Assistant Professor of Economics and Director of the Environmental Resource Management (ERM) Program at California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB). He has been at CSUB since 2003. Prior to CSUB, Dr. Hegde spent a couple of years as a visiting instructor at the Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Hegde received his Ph.D. in Economics from North Carolina State University. His research focused on the broiler industry.

Dr. Hegde's research areas of interest include Risk Management, Agricultural Finance, Migration, and Decision Theory. He is active in research and is interested in pursuing various grant opportunities. To date, he has published a book and a few journal articles.

Dr. Hegde is also actively involved in administering the ERM program. He is mostly concerned with providing students with an excellent academic program that is current and meets the needs of the community. Towards this end, the ERM program was able to get members of the Bakersfield professional community in the field of Occupational Safety and Health to support financially and otherwise, the offering of an area of emphasis within the inter-disciplinary ERM degree. The program has also established a relationship with the Kern County Environmental Health, such that students wishing to pursue careers in Environmental Health can do so now through the ERM program. Dr. Hegde is hopeful that he can bring similar program changes such that students can pursue an interest in agricultural economics as well.



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Thavery Lay-Bounpraseuth earned a Bachelor's degree in Human Services with a minor in Psychology from California State University, Fullerton. After working as an Academic Advisor for one year, she found her passion in Student Affairs and decided to pursue her graduate education. She earned a Master's degree in Counseling with an emphasis in Student Development in Higher Education from California State University, Long Beach.

She has been an Academic Advisor for over 10 years, advising the Undeclared student population and in recent years, the Educational Opportunity Program students. Her passion is working with first generation college students to help them transition from high school to college and to provide them with the necessary tools and resources so that they can successfully navigate through the college experience.

Furthermore, as an Academic Advisor, an educator, a mentor, and a resource to students, she is committed to keeping abreast of the current needs, issues, and opportunities available to students. She strongly believes that it is essential for her to have the most recent information and resources for her student so that they may have access to the same kinds of opportunities that other college students have as they are pursuing their education and planning for their careers.



NEIL LEDFORD



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Neil Ledford has nineteen years of experience in teaching agriculture related courses in the California Community College System. In addition, he has field experience in the fertilizer-crop protection industry, as well as in the vegetable seed industry. During the period from 1988 - 2004 he was employed by two separate international vegetable seed breeder-producers in roles as product manager and marketing manager. He traveled and worked with international responsibilities with both Royal Sluis, Inc. and Syngenta, Inc.

Mr. Ledford holds a Bachelor of Science in Soil Science and a Master of Science in Agricultural Sciences from California State Polytechnic University and has completed professional education and graduate level coursework at U.C. Santa Cruz, UCLA, Purdue University's Krannert School of Management and the American Management Association. He is currently the program leader for the Agricultural Business and Technology Institute at Hartnell College in Salinas, California.



ERIC LÓPEZ



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Dr. López received his Bachelor's Degree in History from Texas A&M University. He went on to receive both his Ed.S. and Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Iowa. He worked as a Bilingual School Psychologist for the Las Cruces Public Schools for several years, and served as the Mental Health Team Co-Lead. He has served on the National Association of School Psychologists, National Certification Board and on the Council for Exceptional Children's Council for Educational Diagnostic Services, FIRST National Certification Board of Directors. He is a consultant for the MONARCH Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago, The National Technical Assistance Center for Culturally Responsive Doctoral Preparation Programs in Special Education at Minority Serving Institutions.

Currently, Dr. López is an Associate Professor and Interim Department Head in the Department of Special Education/Communication Disorders at New Mexico State University. He is faculty for the Educational Diagnostician, School Psychology and Bilingual/Multicultural Special Education Programs. Dr. López is also the FIRST Stan Fulton Endowed Chair for the Improvement of Border and Rural Schools directing the Alliance for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and serving as the Principal Investigator for Southern ENLACE (Engaging Latino Communities in Education). Dr. López has consulted at the local, state, national and international levels. His research interests are in the areas of multicultural assessment, consultation, and interventions.



LORA LOPEZ



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Lora Prins Lopez has been working at the University of California, Riverside since 2007. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Modern Literature from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and has recently completed her Masters in Public Administration at California State University, San Bernardino. In 2000 she joined the Peace Corps as a Secondary Education English Teacher in Yangiyul, Uzbekistan. While there, she was the Communications Facilitator for the Women in Development/ Gender and Development Committee and the Diversity Committee.

Upon her return to the US, she worked for the UC Santa Cruz Career Center as the Events Coordinator. After three years, she moved back to her hometown of Riverside, CA and transferred to UC Riverside where she currently works as the Student Employment Coordinator at the Career Center. UC Riverside is the most diverse in the UC system and one of the most diverse public universities in the nation. Mrs. Lopez is committed to being a resource to the students and providing them with valuable information that will help their development to create future opportunities for success.



JUDY NEWMAN



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Judy Newman began her teaching career as a Vocational Home Economics teacher in Marble Falls, Texas. She later accepted a job as Vocational Coordinator at Edgewood Independent School District in San Antonio. While at Edgewood she was able to supervise career and technology programs at three high schools in the Edgewood district.

Her next job was at East Central ISD in San Antonio. While there she was able to expand the CTE programs and activities. The Agriculture program at East Central was the largest she had worked with and with that support she was able to receive a grant from San Antonio Livestock Exposition to support the Ag program. An Elementary Career Awareness program was developed which included elementary career fairs (always including careers in agriculture)

In 1998 Judy accepted a position as Career & Technical Education (CTE) Director at Southwest ISD. The first fourth grade Ag Fair was held that year at one elementary school. That success led to hosting two Ag Fairs (Fall & Spring) for the nine elementary schools in the district. The CTE programs have expanded during her tenure and enrollment continues to increase in all programs.

In addition to her educational background she is an active member of American Agri-women and a member and officer of Texas Agri-women. She has served on numerous organizations and committees always supporting the important roll of Agriculture in our community, nation and world.

She has working knowledge of partnerships and how business and industry can work with educational institutions to provide opportunities for the students.



LORENA OCHOA



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Lorena Ochoa received a Bachelor of Arts in Human Development, and a Master of Science in Counseling from California State University, Long Beach.

She works as a Title V/Bilingual Counselor at Victor Valley Community College in Victorville, CA. In this capacity she provides counseling services for English as a Second Language and general student population with career, personal, and academic planning. She also provides outreach services to the growing Latino community so they may become aware of the educational programs and services Victor Valley College offers. Providing college-planning workshops to parents/families in the community so they may become aware of the educational resources available to students wishing to pursue a college education. She teaches a college success class for students entering or re-entering college for the first time.

During the fellowship program, she would like to learn about the different opportunities government agencies provide to educational institutions in the form of grants, scholarships, internships, and employment opportunities.



MARIA POVIONES-BISHOP



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Maria Poviones-Bishop is the Director of Industry Relations for the School of Computer and Engineering Technologies at Miami Dade College (MDC). In this role, Maria works with industry partners to develop opportunities for MDC students and alumni. She facilitates communications between academic leadership and technology employers. Maria convenes MDC's advisory committees in the Computer Information Systems and Engineering areas. She conducts student outreach/retention programs.

Maria's background includes 12+ years of experience in the database and telecommunications technology industries. She has held technical leadership positions in every phase of software research and development, from requirements to design to system testing to technical support. In her last corporate assignment before joining MDC, she served as Customer Services Manager, Maintenance Renewals Manager, and Regional Quality Manager for Informix Software's Latin American Customer Support organization. She also served as a Technical Support Engineer for Informix database application development tools. Prior to joining Informix, Maria worked at AT&T Bell Laboratories as a Systems Engineer in the Signaling Network Planning Group and at Siemens Stromberg-Carlson, as a Senior Member of the Technical Staff, specializing in software development for switching products.

Maria holds an Master of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the California Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Miami, with concentrations in computer engineering and physics. In addition, she holds a Master of Arts and a certificate in *Training & Human Resource Development*. Maria has participated in numerous professional and management development programs.



ENRIQUE RENTERÍA



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Enrique Rentería is a counselor and Puente Program co-coordinator at Merced College. He earned his Master's degree in Education, Counseling & Student Services from California State University, Fresno, a Bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies with BCLAD concentration from California State University, Fresno and an associate's degree in Liberal Studies from Merced College. He previously served as a third grade teacher in the Fresno Unified School District.

Enrique collaborates with Puente team members to foster the three components of the Puente Project: rigorous language arts instruction, sustained academic counseling, and mentoring by members of the professional community. As a counselor and instructor, Enrique assists students in planning their education and career paths from vocational training to transferring to four year colleges and universities. He teaches personal development courses to aid in student success.

Enrique was born and raised in the small farming town of Dos Palos, California, which is located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley. As a young boy, he worked in the fields. Every summer he chopped weeds in the cotton fields, stomped cotton on trailers during harvest, harvested walnuts, assisted in irrigating crops, such as cotton, corn, and alfalfa, using conventional flood methods to water conserving sprinkler operations.

He is the son of immigrant farm workers, Santos and Cleotilde Rentería. He is the fourth child of six and the first to attend the university. Enrique is married to Alma and they have three children, Alma, Enrique Jr., and Viviana.



GARTH SCHULTZ



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Garth Schultz has worked at Riverside City College for the past 10 years. He holds a Master's in Educational Technologies from Pepperdine University, has completed coursework for Rehabilitation Counseling through San Diego State University, received his Bachelor's degree from the University of Redlands and his Associate of Arts from Riverside Community College.

Garth is a Marine Corps veteran and currently serves as a Counselor for the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Program at RCC. During his tenure with the college, he has worked as a computer lab instructor and helped set up a comprehensive assistive technology network throughout his three campus district.

From the fellowship, Garth hopes to gain knowledge and experience he can share with the students he serves.



CARMEN VELASQUEZ



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Carmen Velasquez received her Bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Texas in San Antonio and is currently completing a Master's in Communication Studies at St. Mary's University.

Carmen has been with Palo Alto College, a Hispanic Serving Institution, since 2001. She has worked in various capacities from academic advisor to her current position as the Scholarship Support Services Coordinator. In 2008, she created a scholarship center for the purpose of providing students with easily accessible information as well as one-on-one scholarship advising. In addition, with the assistance of the Writing Lab, the center conducts essay and resume workshops. During the 2008-09 academic year approximately 1,200 students used the services provided by the center and over 850 students were awarded merit and/or need based scholarships.

Carmen firmly believes that in order to expand the pool of opportunities for students, especially at Palo Alto College, it is essential to build relationships with external entities. Therefore, it is her goal through the Fellowship Program to develop a working relationship with specific federal agencies and compile information on new programs, scholarships and internships for students majoring in targeted fields of study such as agriculture, horticulture, aviation, math, science and engineering.



MARIA VILLANUEVA



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Maria Villanueva's family, (parents and three siblings) immigrated to California in 1965 from Mexico and settled in the small agricultural town known as King City. Living in a labor camp meant working during vacations and weekends harvesting tomatoes, chiles, apricots and walnuts. Maria's father gave his children the choice to work in the fields or go to school. Four of the five children chose to graduate from high school and go on to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and San Jose State.

Maria has been married for 32 years and has five children. She has lived with her family in San Jose, California for the last 29 years.

Maria has been a middle and high school teacher, as well as a counselor. She has also worked as a parent educator and academic counselor coordinator at the district level. These varied experiences have prepared her for the position she holds as Director of the Center for College Success at the National Hispanic University. The main focus of her job is to coordinate all programs and students services to improve Latino student retention and graduation rates.

Maria holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nutrition Science and Masters Degree/PPS Credential in Counselor Education from San Jose State University in San Jose, California. She has applied to the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program at San Francisco State University for Fall 2009.



BEATRIZ ZAYAS



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Dr. Beatriz Zayas is an Associate Professor at the School of Environmental Affairs, Metropolitan University (UMET) in San Juan, Puerto Rico. There she is involved in molecular toxicology research and in teaching environmental toxicology, risk assessment and risk management. Dr. Zayas is also the coordinator of the Environmental Risk Assessment specialty and is continuously searching for educational resources that can enhance the learning, and training opportunities for her graduate students and keep the academic curriculum updated. Prior to joining the Metropolitan University, she completed her Ph.D. degree on Molecular Toxicology from University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health and was a post doctoral scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Her current research in environmental toxicology involves the monitoring and bioactivity of environmental carcinogens. She is also involved in the development and testing of new anti-neoplastic drugs. Her efforts in the area allowed her to recently submit a patent to the USA patent office for the development of novel fluorescent markers with potential applications for cancer detection. Dr. Zayas also co-hosts a weekly environmental news digest at the local PBS station where local and overseas guests are invited to present and share with the public information of environmental or scientific relevance. As a fellow, Dr. Zayas expects to strongly benefit from a more direct contact with other federal agencies and programs that support this line of research and training.



SCIENCE FELLOWS

Science Fellows collaborate with leading scientists from USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) - one of the world's premier scientific organizations. Participants learn about state-of-the-art agricultural research that solves problems affecting Hispanic Americans and the rest of our nation on a daily basis.

Fellows share their expertise with students at their respective HSIs, motivating Hispanic students to pursue careers in agriculture, science, research, and technology.



PILAR MAUL



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Dr. Pilar Maul is an Assistant Professor of Biology in the School of Science, Technology and Engineering Management at St. Thomas University, Miami Gardens, FL, since 2007. Her post-doctoral training includes three and a half years at the USDA, Agricultural Research Service, US Horticultural Research Laboratory in Fort Pierce, Florida, plus one and a half years at the University of Florida, Department of Environmental Horticulture. She earned her Ph.D. in Cell and Molecular Biology at the Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne, Florida (2002), her Master of Science degree in the Department of Biochemistry at Louisiana State University (1996) and her Bachelor of Science in Biology at the National Agricultural University, La Molina, in Lima, Peru (1983).

Her research has focused on the identification of molecular mechanisms underpinning the acquisition of chilling tolerance and the induction of somatic embryogenesis in citrus species. In addition, Dr. Maul has over fifteen years of experience in the use of plant tissue culture systems studying various aspects of plant biology that began when she was a research technician at the International Potato Center in Lima, Peru. Currently, Dr. Maul is developing a plant tissue culture program for the propagation and conservation of critically endangered Florida species in collaboration with the Rare Plant Conservation Program in Bok Tower Gardens, Lake Wales, FL.



RUDY ORTIZ



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Rudy M. Ortiz is an Assistant Professor of Physiology and Nutrition at the University of California, Merced. He is one of the founding faculty of the newest campus of the University of California system. Dr. Ortiz received his Bachelor of Arts in Biology (1990) and his Master of Science in Wildlife Fisheries Sciences (1994) from Texas A&M University before obtaining his Ph.D. from UC Santa Cruz in Biology (2001). Dr. Ortiz was a UC Office of the President Postdoctoral Fellow from 2001-2003, a Ford Fellow from 2003-2004, and an NIH NRSA Fellow from 2004-2005. His later two fellowships were awarded while training at Tulane University Medical School in New Orleans, LA. Currently, his research focuses on renal and metabolic adaptations to perturbations such as increased blood pressure and prolonged fasting, in either a natural or induced state.

Dr. Ortiz has been a strong advocate and proponent for the advancement of underrepresented minorities in life sciences as an attempt to help address disparities in highly qualified and well-trained minorities in biomedical research and related health fields. Dr. Ortiz has consistently had a large number of undergraduate students in his lab, especially those from traditionally underrepresented groups. With a common thread of metabolic disorders, his research comes in a variety of flavors that includes the involvement of many national and international collaborations that includes Japan, Mexico, and Brazil.



MARIEL PEREZ-VELEZ



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Dr. Mariel E. Perez-Velez received her Bachelor's degree in Biology from the Universidad de Puerto Rico – Rio Piedras Campus, and her Ph.D. Degree in Microbiology and Medical Zoology from the Universidad de Puerto Rico - Medical Sciences Campus. During her doctorate studies, she received the *Gates Millennium Scholarship* from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. She also received several recognitions due to her excellent academic, research and leadership performance. Her thesis and dissertation was focused on the development of DNA vaccines against Dengue-2 virus. Her work was recently accepted for publication at the Puerto Rico Health Sciences Journal.

Following graduation, she worked as a technical support scientist in Abbott Diagnostic International, Ltd. In there, she was certified as a Quality Improvement Associate (CQIA) by the American Society of Quality. Her passion to educate others in Sciences was the key factor in leaving her position in the industry and become an Assistant Professor at the Universidad del Este (UNE) in Carolina, Puerto Rico. At UNE, in addition to educate undergraduate students that enrolled at the Applied Microbiology Program, she is currently a research mentor, as part of an undergraduate research program (NIH-URGREAT-RISE). Her studies consist in the use of microbiological and Quantitative Polymerase Chain Reaction methods for the detection of waterborne pathogens in recreational beaches.

Dr. Perez-Velez is seeking to get experience in food safety to become a better supportive resource for the upcoming minor in Food Safety, which is in the process of being implemented at her institution. She is expecting that this fellowship program will provide her the essential skills and knowledge to become an effective mentor to undergraduate students who desire to enroll in this new minor. She resides in Cataño, Puerto Rico with her husband Rodrigo and their two-year-old son, Diego Alejandro... her inspiration.



SYLVIA VETRONE



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Sylvia A. Vetrone received a Bachelor of Arts in biology from Whittier College in 1999 and a Ph.D. in Molecular, Cellular and Integrative Physiology from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2008. In 2006 she began teaching at Whittier College as an Irvine Fellow and transitioned into an Assistant Professor in 2007. Along with her teaching and research, Dr. Vetrone also serves as a coordinator for the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship and as the faculty advisor for both the Biology Club and Hispanic Student Association at Whittier College.

Dr. Vetrone's research interests and publications are in the areas of immunology, disease pathology, and neuromuscular disorders. Her current research involves understanding the role of phytoestrogens (a.k.a., isoflavonoids, isoflavones, and dietary estrogens) on the DAF-2 Insulin-like pathway that is responsible for innate immunity (bacterial resistance), longevity (life-span) and oxidative stress in the nematode animal model *C. elegans*. Phytoestrogens are a diverse group of naturally occurring non-steroidal plant compounds that have the ability to cause estrogenic or anti-estrogenic effects, due to their structural similarity to estrogen, and therefore hold the potential to invoke beneficial effects upon fertility, lifespan, and oxidative stress across various organisms without carrying many of the feminizing effects of hormonal estrogen.



FELLOWS' ADVISORS

Fellows' Advisors provide guidance, support and advice for making the most out of the Fellowship experience. The advisors are alumni of the USDA E. (Kika) De La Garza Fellowship Program, and have demonstrated leadership, appreciation and understanding of the mission of the USDA, the HSI National Program, and other federal agencies.

As a mentor, the Fellow's Advisors ensure that the Fellows connect the respective goals and challenges of their HSIs with the information gathered throughout the Fellowship. In addition, the advisors encourage the sharing of ideas, facilitation of dialogue, and highlight opportunities for collaboration.



MARK BENDER



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E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellow 2007

Dr. Mark Bender holds a doctoral philosophy degree from Oregon State University, a master's degree in agriculture from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, a Bachelor's in agriculture from California State University, Fresno and an Associate of Arts from San Joaquin Delta College. He is currently serving as professor and chair of the newly formed Department of Agricultural Studies at California State University, Stanislaus, a partnership between the university and California community colleges. Prior to holding this position, he served as dean of the Agriculture, Environmental Sciences and Technical Education Division of Modesto Junior College from 1997 through 2002. Before serving as dean he taught environmental horticulture and agricultural business at Modesto Junior College.

He is a recognized leader in statewide curriculum and articulation in agriculture, serving as the chair for the Statewide Inter-segmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum, chair for the California Postsecondary Agricultural Articulation Collaborative and as director of the curriculum and articulation portion of the Statewide Discipline/Industry Collaborative Project for the California Community Colleges.

Mark is a proud father of 4 and even prouder grandfather of 5, he resides in Modesto, California with his wife Cindy.



DAN HOSTETLER



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E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellow 2007

Dan Hostetler has served California State Polytechnic University, Pomona for 31 years. He received his Bachelor's in agronomy and Master's in agricultural science from the same institution. Following graduation, he worked with two large farming companies in the San Joaquin Valley before returning to Cal Poly Pomona in 1976. He has been the department chairman of the Horticulture/Plant and Soil Science Department at the university for 15 years.

Dan is a member of the American Society of Agronomy and past board member of the California Chapter, American Forage and Grassland Council, and the California Alfalfa and Forage Association. He recently served 12 years as chairman of the Southern California Agricultural Land Foundation, a land conservancy group in Chino. He has been awarded the outstanding teacher award from the College of Agriculture and Gamma Sigma Delta, the national honor society for agriculture.

Mr. Hostetler has taught various agronomy classes, including some focused on crops and farm management. He also coaches a successful crops judging team which competes in national events.

He resides in Chino Hills, California with his wife Melinda and their three sons.



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